

## PEPFAR COP/ROP 2021 FAQ

### 1. COP/ROP 2021 Resumption

#### **Q1: When will the COP/ROP 2021 process resume?**

A1: The PEPFAR Country/Regional Operational Plan (COP/ROP) 2021 planning process will resume, effective April 1, 2021 and will conclude no later than May 21, 2021.

#### **Q2: How will the COP/ROP 2021 timeline process and timeline be streamlined upon its resumption on April 1?**

A2: The PEPFAR COP/ROP 2021 process will be different, shorter, and much more flexible than in previous years as is summarized below.

- April 1-14, 2021: Preparations and deliberations within the U.S. government interagency and partners
- April 15-29, 2021: Maximum of 2 days (4 hours per day) of virtual planning/review meetings for all countries and region focused on their respective priority areas, occurring on a rolling basis. Countries and regions will have the flexibility to self-select earlier dates within this window if they are closer to completion. Those that feel they need more time can self-select later dates within this window.
- May 3-21, 2021: Streamlined tool completion, submission and approvals for each country or region will occur on a rolling basis. Countries and regions will have the flexibility to complete their COP/ROP 2021 process sooner than May 3, if they wish.

#### **Q3: When/How will additional details on the COP/ROP 2021 be shared?**

A3: More detailed information on COP/ROP 2021 resumption plans will be forthcoming, including through PEPFAR global webinars.

#### **Q4: Upon the resumption of COP/ROP 21 planning, will we be able to pick up where we left off or will we have to start over? Will budgets and PLLs change?**

A4: When COP/ROP 2021 planning resumes on April 1, the significant time and effort already invested by PEPFAR teams and partners to inform programmatic direction in line with the existing FY 2021 planning level budgets will be well utilized. As in all other COP/ROP cycles, the ultimate level of funding provided to each OU is not final until it is fully notified to and approved by Congress.

#### **Q5: Will there be any issues with the timely approval of Congressional notifications and the availability of COP/ROP 2021 funds for Fiscal Year 2022 programming?**

A5: We are firmly committed to ensure that collaborative, transparent, and data-driven COP/ROP 2021 plans are completed in every PEPFAR-supported country and region and that there is no disruption in HIV services at the start of fiscal year (FY) 2022.

Following the anticipated COP/ROP 2021 headquarters approvals in May (or sooner, if countries are prepared), PEPFAR will work through the summer months to move expeditiously through the required processes of Congressional notifications, approvals, and transfer of funds to implementing agencies in advance of the beginning of FY 2022.

**Q6: Can we reassure host country governments and partners that our funding commitment goes forward? Some host country governments are in the midst of their annual planning, but their plan depends on knowing what the U.S. government will provide. When will we know what the US commitment is?**

A6: You can reassure host country governments and other partners that the U.S. government commitment to supporting their HIV responses remains strong. In fact, the temporary pause is about ensuring we can deliver on our commitments in COP/ROP 20, by focusing on the adaption and implementation that are required to optimize program impact and patient outcomes, particularly in the context of COVID-19.

When COP/ROP 2021 planning resumes on April 1, the significant time and effort already invested by PEPFAR teams and partners to inform programmatic direction in line with the existing FY 2021 planning level budgets will be well utilized.

As in all other COP/ROP cycles, the ultimate level of funding provided to each PEPFAR operating unit is not final until it is fully notified to and approved by Congress.

**Q7: Will PEPFAR ensure the same minimum standards are upheld in civil society participation in the resumed COP/ROP 2021 planning process?**

A7: PEPFAR remains deeply committed to prioritizing meaningful and transparent dialogue with partner governments, multilaterals, and civil society during the resumption of the COP/ROP 2021 process, recognizing the constraints imposed by the unprecedented situation of COVID-19 and a much shortened and streamlined process by all.

**Q8: How will the COP/ROP 2021 process reflect relevant new policies of the Biden-Harris Administration, such as the rescission of the Mexico City Policy?**

A8: COP/ROP 2021 will reflect and incorporate new policies prioritized by the Biden-Harris Administration, including rescission of the Mexico City Policy, reengagement with the World Health Organization, and others that are relevant to PEPFAR.

As per President Biden's January 28, 2021 "[Memorandum on Protecting Women's Health at Home and Abroad](#)", the Mexico City Policy/Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance is rescinded. Thereby, PEPFAR funding and partners are no longer subject to these policy requirements and instead should follow those outlined in the January 28, 2021 Executive Order.

**Q9: For OUs that resolved issues and had made progress on COP/ROP 2021 budget and program design, is there guidance on whether or not these discussions can be re-opened when we resume planning?**

A9: When COP/ROP 2021 planning resumes on April 1, the significant time and effort already invested by PEPFAR teams and partners to inform programmatic direction in line with the existing FY 2021 planning level budgets will be well utilized.

**Q10: What flexibility is S/GAC providing in planning for COP/ROP 2021 resumption?**

A10: S/GAC is providing significant flexibility for countries and regions to complete the remaining elements of their COP/ROP 2021 process within the April 1-May 21 timeframe. For instances, countries and regions will have the flexibility to self-select planning meeting dates (maximum of 2 days, 4 hours per day) between April 15-29 to hold virtual planning/review meetings focused on their respective

priority areas. More information will be forthcoming on this. Similarly, countries and regions can choose to complete their COP/ROP 2021 process sooner than the May 3-21 window for streamlined tool completion, submission, and approvals, if they wish.

**Q11: Will COP/ROP 2021 tools (e.g. FAST, Datapack, etc.) still be required when planning resumes?**

A11: Key COP/ROP 2021 tools (e.g., FAST, Datapack, etc.) were streamlined for use in COP/ROP 21. For example, no site-level targets are required in the Datapack and the FAST has shifted to program areas. These tools are essential for tracking and monitoring targets and budgets to ensure accountability and impact of U.S. taxpayer dollars. As COP/ROP 2021 resumes, and given the unprecedented circumstances facing PEPFAR teams and partners, the Table 6 Excel Workbook and Surveys-Surveillance, Research, and Evaluation (SRE) Tool will not be required. The Resource Alignment Funding Landscape Tool will not require any further effort by country teams. The Strategic Direction Summary (SDS) will be kept in full but will use the already completed full COP/ROP 2020 SDS and only highlight new COP 21 decisions/agreements for full transparency.

**Q12: Please note the following updates to PEPFAR 2021 Country and Regional Operational Plan (COP/ROP) Guidance for all PEPFAR Countries:**

- Pg. 160: *Section 5.9.4 Implementation of Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance in PEPFAR Programs* has been deleted as the policy was rescinded by President Biden in January 2021
- Dates and processes referenced in *Section 2.5.3 Active Engagement with Community and Civil Society* (pages 101-103), and *Section 5.3 COP/ROP Timeline* (pages 141-146) have been superseded by the March 5, 2021 S/GAC message and cable on the streamlined COP/ROP21 planning and approval timeline.
- Pg. 62: *Figure 2.3.2.2: HIV case finding approaches supported by PEPFAR, based on ART coverage* was corrected to maintain that minimum 5% yield is expected for Other Facility-based Testing when national or SNU ART coverage is under 70%.
- Links to resources on PEPFAR SharePoint for U.S. Government teams were updated on pages 94 and 442.
- *Section 5.4 Required COP Elements Checklist* (page 147) will be updated when further information is available.
- References to Table 6 and the SRE Tool as required for submission in COP21 in *Section 7.3 Planning Step 3: Set Preliminary Budgets, Targets, and Above-Site Activities* (pages 580 and 594-597) should be disregarded. *Section 8.4 Table 6 and Surveys-Surveillance, Research and Evaluation (SRE) Tool Excel Workbook* (pages 606-611) has been crossed out as these tools are no longer required for COP21 submission. Guidance considerations on prioritizing and funding above site interventions remain important for COP21 planning.
- Guidance in *Section 8.2 Strategic Direction Summary (SDS)* (pages 605-606) is superseded by the March 5, 2021 resumption announcement on streamlining COP/ROP21 to simply describe what will change in COP/ROP21 by updating the existing COP20 SDS. OUs do not need to draft an entirely new COP21 SDS from the updated template previously provided. COP21 no longer uses budget codes, so *Table B.1.3 Resource Allocation by PEPFAR Budget Code (new funds only)* in Appendix B is no longer required. Instead, OUs should paste the total budget with breakout by applied pipeline, new funding and total spend – a visualization which can be generated from the COP21 FAST Dossier in PAW. OUs do not need to paste a screen shot of Table 6 / SRE activities in Appendix C since that tool is no longer required for COP21 submission. OUs should still answer the questions with any updated focus or strategic shifts in above site investments plus surveys, surveillance, research and

evaluation priorities in *Section 5.0 Program Support Necessary to Achieve Sustained Epidemic Control*. More information will be forthcoming to review details.

## **2. COP/ROP 2021 Temporary Pause**

### **Q13: Why was the temporary pause issued in the first place?**

A13: Recognizing the tremendous toll that COVID-19 continues to take on countries and regions supported by PEPFAR around the globe, on February 9, 2021, PEPFAR issued a temporary pause on its COP/ROP 2021 planning process, with resumption planned no later than the beginning of April. During this temporary pause, PEPFAR teams and partners have continued to focus on the current implementation of COP/ROP 2020, adapting and optimizing the PEPFAR program amid COVID-19 to best serve HIV clients and beneficiaries during these challenging times. PEPFAR is deeply grateful to all of its teams and partners for their flexibility, patience, and commitment to ensuring access to life-saving HIV services around the globe, particularly as we all continue to adapt in the context of COVID-19.

### **Q14: Did the temporary pause in the COP/ROP 2021 process signal a lack of commitment by the Biden-Harris Administration to PEPFAR?**

A14: No. The Biden-Harris Administration is fully committed to and supportive of PEPFAR's mission to control the HIV/AIDS epidemic as successfully led and managed by the State Department, executed through U.S. government implementing agencies, and conducted in close collaboration with our many partners and communities around the globe.

### **Q15: When the temporary pause was announced, our OU was very close to finalizing some COP/ROP 2021 processes, discussions, and deliverables (e.g. targets, budgets, Table 6, SDS, etc.). Can we continue this work and find a more natural stopping point, or do we need to immediately pause all meetings and work related to COP/ROP 21?**

A15: All COP/ROP 2021 activities should continue to be paused until April 1, when the process will official resume. Until April 1, all formal and informal activities related to COP/ROP 2021 should continue to be paused. These activities include but are not limited to COP/ROP 2021 meetings, tools development for targets, budgets, etc., SDS development, and any associated internal or external discussions.

### **Q16: If the interagency agrees, is there any flexibility in continuing COP/ROP21 finalization during the temporary pause?**

A16: Even if the interagency agrees, teams may not continue the COP/ROP 2021 process and finalization during the temporary pause. All COP/ROP 2021 planning can recommence on April 1.

### **Q17: Does the pause apply to meetings about COP/ROP 2021 with host country governments and external stakeholders (e.g. civil society)?**

A17: Yes. Any COP/ROP 2021-related planning meetings, including associated internal U.S. government planning or technical consultations, that are scheduled during the timeframe of the temporary pause should be postponed until further notice.

### **Q18: How will a delay factor in commodity orders that will need to be placed to ensure no stockouts, especially for OUs without significant pipeline?**

Updated: March 5, 2021

A18: We are committed to avoiding any disruption in HIV services for the start of fiscal year 2022, including by ensuring the sufficient supply of HIV-related commodities.

**Q19: How will the COP/ROP 2021 planning pause affect FY22 IP work plan submissions? Can work plan development continue during this pause?**

A19: During the pause, any work on FY22 IP work plans should be postponed until further notice.

**Q20: How will the COP/ROP 2021 planning pause factor in partners ending in September with no carryover? This could cause major disruption.**

A20: We are committed to avoiding any disruption in HIV services for the start of fiscal year 2022, including in cases where partner awards may be ending in September 2021 without provisions for carryover. If there are specific instances of concern in this area, please identify them to your Chair/PPM so S/GAC leadership can engage on this with you.

**Q21: Is there a plan to ask countries to further assess the impact of COVID-19 on PEPFAR programming?**

A21: Country teams will engage in a COP/ROP 20 (FY 21/Q1) POART review, during which further impact of COVID-19 on PEPFAR programming will be assessed. The POART will be a lighter touch process; more information was disseminated on February 23, 2021 and most should be completed by March 19, 2021.

**Q22: During the temporary pause, what strategic and epidemiologic efforts should still take place now that are related to COP/ROP 2021 planning?**

A22: Country teams should understand and support the process for updated/new estimates of people living with HIV. This includes reviewing the draft estimates alongside prior epidemiologic estimates to understand any shifts and what implications these may have for program changes. Policy changes and minimum program requirements are in varying stages of implementation at site levels and we should make sure they are being implemented because this informs future year planning.

**Q23: Will TBD re-naming be approved and included in FAST and DATIM now that COP/ROP 2021 has been delayed to April? The original deadline for inclusion was in January.**

A23: Yes, TBD renaming will continue to be processed and approved during the pause. Updated FASTs would be available at the first tool check in after COP/ROP 2021 formally restarts. More information will be provided as the restarted COP/ROP 2021 timeline is completed.

**Q24: Will there be additional funding allocations after the pause due to the impact of COVID-19?**

A24: We will review Q1 data to see the impact on HIV services due to COVID-19. More information will be forthcoming.

### **3. COP/ROP 2020 Implementation**

**Q25: Can COP/ROP 20 OPUs still be submitted during the temporary pause period?**

A25: Yes. OPUs can be submitted and processed during the temporary pause. We expect that when COP/ROP 21 restarts, OPU processing will slow.

**Q26: What will be done to ease the backlog of OPU approvals? Is it possible to consider a lighter touch OPU process for COP/ROP 20 OPUs?**

A26: COP/ROP 20 OPUs are currently being processed as quickly as possible during the temporary pause. As OPU processing will slow once COP/ROP 21 planning and development restarts, country teams should submit priority COP/ROP 20 OPUs soon to increase their likelihood of being approved expeditiously. If there are certain OU-specific issues, please raise these to your respective Chairs/PPMs so we can ensure expeditious approval.

**Q27: Will approved OPUs be reflected in tools when the COP/ROP 21 process resumes?**

A27: FASTs will not be updated with OPU changes before the COP/ROP 21 process starts but will be updated during the first tools check-in after COP/ROP 21 restarts. Updates through the OPU process will be reflected in the FAST/Datapack. More details on dates will be forthcoming.

**Q28: What will the FY21 Q1 “POART light” look like, including the extent of preparations? When will Q1 POARTs be scheduled?**

A28: The purpose of the FY21 Q1 POART discussion is to facilitate collaborative problem solving on limited, selected topics. This POART should NOT be a comprehensive presentation and discussion of all Q1 data for all targets and beyond. After reviewing Q1 data, the agenda should focus only on COVID-19 plus the 3-4 highest priority issues for POART discussion. The POART discussion should be no more than 90 minutes with a maximum of 3-5 slides per agenda topic. POART calls (via phone or web conferencing) should be scheduled to be completed no later than Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Q29: Given the worsening COVID-19 situation in many countries, is there a possibility of additional COVID-19 reprogramming requests?**

A29: Please raise specific issues with your Chairs/PPMs for consideration.